

We are seeking information to figure out exactly what has happened with taxpayer money. Now, everybody has heard about Solyndra. We all know how that has run off the rails. It went bankrupt; it wasted taxpayer money. Now we have Fisker, which is a company that received Federal loan guarantees. Right now, it's trying to renegotiate the terms of its initial loan. Guess what, now we find out that they're laying off employees—20 employees and 40 contractors.

Yet, again, another Department of Energy Loan Guarantee Program, under the watch of Secretary Chu, is having difficulty, and Federal taxpayer money is being wasted.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ALF LARSON

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Alf Larson, a Minnesota World War II veteran who survived the infamous Bataan Death March. Alf passed away just last week, on January 30, at the age of 93.

Despite experiencing one of the worst aspects of war, Alf kept his faith in the Lord. During his 41 months in captivity as a prisoner, Alf would read the New Testament and the Book of Psalms, which he kept hidden.

After the war, Alf returned home, got married and then reenlisted in the Air Force in 1948. He left the Air Force 6 years later, and came back to Crystal, Minnesota, and raised a family—his three children. Like most heroes, Alf insisted that he was just a regular guy who was doing his duty, saying, I'm not a hero. I was just doing my job.

Mr. Speaker, last week Minnesota and our Nation lost one of our greatest heroes.

To Alf and all the other veterans who serve our country admirably, I want to say thank you for your incredible sacrifice.

NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS DAY AND THE RELEASE OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN EGYPT

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge today the honoring, or the recognition, of National Black HIV/AIDS Day in acknowledging the work that many organizations have done to stop the devastation of HIV/AIDS in certain populations.

I will submit a statement into the record extensively acknowledging the work that has been accomplished; but I rise today to address a very important international issue that appears to be politicized by those running for President in the Republican primary.

First of all, we should all be concerned for Americans who are being

held by ally Egypt, and we should be concerned for the safe passage of those Americans as quickly as possible. Yet it is ridiculous to associate this incident with the taking of hostages in Iran some decades ago. But, of course, where there is foolery, there is opportunity.

I call upon Egyptian Americans to work with this administration to stop the holding of American citizens and to have them released immediately, and I will continue pressing for this as the weeks and days go on.

NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. NUNNELEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. NUNNELEE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today begins the observation of National Marriage Week. It is a week that begins today, February 7, and will go through Valentine's Day, February 14, next week. Around the Nation, in fact, indeed around the world, there are those organizations and individuals who will be conducting events around National Marriage Week.

So I think it's all too fitting and proper that we take this hour on the floor of the House of Representatives to recognize the importance of marriage and the importance of homes. Tonight, we will be having a series of speeches that will reflect the importance of marriage and the home, and we will also recognize National Marriage Week.

Mr. Speaker, for the first of those speeches, I would like to recognize my friend, my colleague from Mississippi (Mr. HARPER).

Mr. HARPER. I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to speak on behalf of National Marriage Week. What a special time it is for us. I will also say what an inspiration you and your wife are to my wife and myself on the way that you live that marriage.

As we look and see how our society is today and as we see the prevalence of divorce and the breakdown of the family, I think it's very fitting that we talk for a moment about the importance of marriage and what it means in our lives. While it is not attainable for some family situations or some situations, it should always be our goal to keep that family unit together and to hold that bedrock of our society together.

My experience with marriage came from watching my mom and dad. My dad was a gunner in a B-17 in World War II. He came right after World War II to Columbus Air Force Base, which is in Congressman NUNNELEE's district, and met my mother at a dance when she came down from Lackey, Mississippi, outside Aberdeen. From that point forward, my dad decided he would move his allegiance from Oklahoma to the State of Mississippi.

I watched that marriage through my life. While no marriage is always easy or trouble free, they stuck together through thick and thin. I know, for us—my dad, my late father, being a petroleum engineer—we transferred quite often from kindergarten through the 12th grade. I was in 10 different schools in four different States—and we actually spent another summer in a fifth State—but Mississippi was always home. That bond that we had was very special because, as long as Mom and Dad and my brother and I were together, there was that protection, that safety that came from that; and how I watched them as they handled things that came up in their life inspired me.

Then in that last move that we had from the State of California back to Mississippi, I wound up in a high school in the 10th grade with a great friend of mine whose conduct and behavior indirectly led me to accept Jesus Christ as my savior at the end of my 10th grade year. He got me going to his church, and it was there that I spotted this beautiful young lady; but I had to wait until she broke up with this boyfriend, and then I moved in for the kill.

□ 1700

So I started dating my wife Sidney when she was 15 and I was 17. We dated 5½ years before we got married. We would have gotten married sooner but we were afraid to stay by ourselves, so we had to wait just a little while. But we've now been married 32 years. And I can tell you that I can't imagine not being married to Sidney.

As I look and we talk about National Marriage Week, and you look at the joys and the troubles that you go through in life—and for us, part of that was having a son with special needs. Our son Livingston has Fragile X Syndrome, and the difficulty of going through that with him is something I could have never done without that bond of marriage and that strength that came not only from the Lord but from my relationship with my wife. We've been blessed with our son Livingston, what a wonderful son, and our daughter Maggie. And having that family together and them having us together, I think, helps us as we build our society and we move forward.

I want to commend the gentleman from Mississippi for having this event today where we can come and speak on that. And I want you to know that I'm a very smart husband too because I'm giving this speech, wearing the tie that my wife gave me for Valentine's Day last year. So hopefully that will score points.

But I want to say, as we look at this, let's try to encourage people that are going through difficulties in their marriage to stay together, to keep that family together. And this is something that we can build on that will benefit our society.

Mr. NUNNELEE. Thank you, Mr. HARPER.

Now I would like to call on my friend Mr. LAMBORN, the gentleman from Colorado.